

## *AFRICAN QUEER STUDIES*

SPRING 2014

Professor Xavier Livermon

AFR372G (30705), WGS 340 (47987)

MWF 10-11 a.m., PAR 306

Office Hours W 9-10 in 243F Bellmont Hall

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course, we will examine the development of African Queer Studies as the interdisciplinary study of sexuality on the African continent and its impact on the academic and activist realm. We will focus on intersectional feminist and queer theory and how it gives us the tools to rethink issues of oppression and domination in relationship to race, nation, sex, gender, and sexuality on the African continent. Of particular interest will be LGBT Activism and the ways in which queer Africans engage and shape their sexuality and create forms of belonging to their countries and their communities.

### **Learning Objectives**

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify major themes of African Queer Studies
- 2) Understand queer theory and its relationship to African lives and LGBT Activism
- 3) Understand how queer theory informs and is informed by the everyday lives and experiences of queer Africans

### **Grading Policy**

Attendance and Participation 20%

Facilitation of Class Discussion 20%

Response Papers 20%

Project/Paper Proposal 10%

Final Project/Paper 30%

### Grading Scale

A 93-100	C 73-76
<b>A- 90-92</b>	<b>C- 70-72</b>
<b>B+ 87-89</b>	<b>D+ 67-69</b>
<b>B 83-86</b>	<b>D 63-66</b>
<b>B- 80-82</b>	<b>D- 60-62</b>
<b>C+ 77-79</b>	<b>F 0- 59</b>

### *Required Texts:*

**Queer African Reader** (ed.) Sokari Ekine and Hakima Abbas

Required Text is available for purchase at The University Cooperative Bookstore 2246 Guadalupe St. (512) 476-7211

### Course Requirements:

**Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend class every session. Participation in all aspects of the class is MANDATORY. All readings and assignments should be completed before class meetings and students are responsible for adding to class discussions of material. Please note that attendance and participation is worth 20% of your total grade. Late arrivals are disruptive to class and I will not repeat concepts and assignments given during class. If you miss a class or are late, you are still responsible for any announcements, assignments, lecture material and/or deadlines that are made. Your grade will be affected if you have more than three absences during the semester. For each additional absence a student will lose 1/3 of their final grade in the course.

**Active Learning Environment:** This is a discussion -based course. While I will do some lecturing, it is my expectation that students will come to class having completed the readings and ready to discuss the articles assigned. It is my teaching philosophy that students will learn as much from each other as they will from me. Discussion based courses allow students to be active participants in their learning, giving the student the opportunity to place the reading in the context of his or her lived experience. This does not mean that the student should ignore the scholarly evidence presented or make arguments solely based on their opinion. Rather, it allows students to enrich the scholarly environment in relation to their life experiences. My job as the instructor is to facilitate and guide the discussion, create a safe participatory environment and make sure that we stay on topic. **Merely being present does not count as active engagement.**

**Bringing Materials to Class:** As part of an active learning environment, students are required to bring all necessary materials to actively engage in the discussion to class each week. These necessary materials include but are not limited to the articles assigned for the week. While students are not required to print out hard copies of the pdf. materials for in

class discussions/assignments, they will be expected to have these materials accessible in electronic form.

**Response Papers:** Students will be divided into writing groups and be responsible for a short (2 page) written response paper based on the readings for their assigned week. The response papers will be due at the beginning of class on the Friday of the week that students are assigned. I will drop the lowest graded response paper. A separate handout explaining the response paper assignment will be provided.

**Facilitation:** Students will be assigned to facilitate 3 classroom discussions during the course of the semester. The facilitation will require students to briefly present on the reading for the day and provide a set of discussion questions for the class to interrogate. The lowest graded facilitation will be dropped.

**Paper Proposal and Final Paper/Project:** **The final paper will be a research paper (7-10 pages) that will be designed to assess students' accumulated application of knowledge.** Papers must be TYPED, double-spaced, with Times New Roman (or equivalent) 12 point font and 1 inch margins. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Please also note that students must submit a hard copy of the final paper on the final day of class. Students will develop their final paper/project proposal in consultation with the professor. Prior to the due date of the final paper students will submit a paper/project proposal to the professor for approval. Handouts will be given during the semester providing further detail on the assignment. The due dates of both assignments are noted on the syllabus.

**Canvas:** I will be in contact with you about updates in assignments through Canvas. It is the students' responsibility to make sure that Canvas has your updated email address.

**Code of Mutual Respect:** In general, this is not a lecture class, but one grounded in dialogue. Feel free to be candid and direct in this class. Your insights are important, and your voice needs to be heard, so look forward to the opportunity to chime in. I will respect you as adults and assume that you will treat others in the class with respect as well. Because we will be sharing many personal ideas which may conflict with your own personal ideas and beliefs, it is important that you strive to be considerate, sensitive, and respectful. Be prepared to offer constructive criticism as well as receive it. We will discuss work that includes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender themes in this course. Students are expected to approach all class material with maturity and academic rigor.

**Code of Academic Conduct:** University policy requires that students cite sources they use in their work. **THIS INCLUDES PARAPHRASING** of materials. Any inclusion of ideas that are not your own will be considered plagiarism. Students who do not properly cite ideas, quotes or paraphrasing of other published or unpublished material will automatically face disciplinary action which will also be reflected in their grade. As a reminder, the honor code of the University is as follows, "As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity." For more information on the Honor Code please see the following link <http://www.utexas.edu/about-ut/mission-core-purpose-honor-code>

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student with a documented disability (physical or

cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

**Religious Holidays:** If you observe a recognized religious holiday that is in conflict with the university schedule, please come talk to me.

**Writing Center:** I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222: <http://www.uwc.utexas.edu/>). The UWC offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. These services are not just for writing that has "problems": Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. The UWC's trained consultants work with students from every department on both academic and non-academic writing. Using methods that preserve the integrity of your work, they help you develop strategies to improve your writing and become a more independent writer. Whether you are writing a lab report, a resume, a term paper, a statement for an application, or your own poetry, UWC consultants will be happy to work with you.

## COURSE OUTLINE

DATE	Reading Assignment
WEEK 1	
1/13	Introduction: No Reading
1/15	Video: On the Street Homosexuality in Africa
1/17	Video: Is Homosexuality un-African?
WEEK 2	
1/20	NO CLASS MLK Jr. Holiday
<b>KEY TERMS AND THEORETICAL DEBATES</b>	
1/22	"African" Kevin Gaines "Queer" Siobhan B. Somerville "Modern" Chandan Reddy
1/24	"Gender" Judith Halberstam "Sex" Bruce Burgett "Identity" Carla Kaplan
WEEK 3	
1/27	Ruth Hubbard "The Social Construction of Sexuality" Jonathan Katz "The Invention of Heterosexuality"
1/29	"Heterosexual Africa?: An Introduction" Marc Epprecht

1/31	“African Intimacies: Introduction” Neville Hoad
WEEK 4	
2/3	“Rethinking Sexualities in Africa: An Introduction” Signe Arnfred
2/5	“An Ethnography of Silences” Bill Pincheon
2/7	“Confronting the Politics of Non-Conforming Sexualities in Africa” Sylvia Tamale
<b>THE COLONIAL CONSTRUCTION OF SEXUALITY IN AFRICA</b>	
WEEK 5	
2/10	Tushabe “Uganda’s Emblem of Colonial Imported Homosexuality” (pending permissions) or “African Sodomy in the Missionary Position Neville Hoad
2/12	“ Sexuality, Africa, History” Marc Epprecht
<b>THE POLITICS OF HOMOPHOBIA IN AFRICA</b>	
2/14	“Sex and the State” Marc Epprecht
WEEK 6	
2/17	“The Origins of Senegalese Homophobia” Babacar M’Baye
2/19	“Lost and Found in Translation” Rudolf Gaudio
2/21	“Struggles and Strategies” Marc Epprecht
WEEK 7	
2/24	“Reinventing Liberation” Peter Drucker “HRC and Vulture Funds”
<b>ISSUES OF TRANSLATION AND TERMINOLOGY</b>	
2/26	“Shifting Boundaries of Sexual Identities in Cape Town” Andrew Tucker
2/28	“Introducing YanDaudu” Rudolf Gaudio
<b>QUEER ACTIVISM</b>	
WEEK 8	
3/3	Queer African Reader
3/5	Queer African Reader
3/7	Queer African Reader <b>PAPER PROPOSAL DUE</b>
WEEK 9	
No Class Spring Break	
WEEK 10	
3/17	Queer African Reader

3/19	Queer African Reader
3/21	Queer African Reader
<b>QUEER NARRATIVE AND PLEASURE</b>	
WEEK 11	
3/24	Queer African Reader
3/26	Queer African Reader
3/28	Queer African Reader
WEEK 12	
3/31	Selections from Queer Africa
4/2	Selections from Hijab: Unveiling Queer Muslim Lives
4/4	"I Myself Had a Sweetie: Rethinking Female Same Sex Intimacy Beyond the Institution of Marriage" H. Grunkel
WEEK 13	
4/7	"Abangibhamayo bathi Ngimnandi" Hugh McLean and Linda Ngcobo
4/9	"The One Who First Says I Love You" Serena Dankwa
4/11	"This Thing is Sweet" William Banks
WEEK 14	
4/14	"Its All About 50/50" Zethu Matebeni
<b>QUEER BELONGING</b>	
4/16	"Outing the City" Zethu Matebeni
4/18	"Queerying Freedom" Xavier Livermon
WEEK 15	
4/21	"Soweto Nights" Xavier Livermon
4/23	"Usable Traditions" Xavier Livermon
4/25	"Mapping Our Histories" Zanele Muholi
WEEK 16	
4/28	Discuss Final Projects
4/30	Discuss Final Projects
5/2	<b>FINAL PAPER/PROJECT DUE</b>